

# Safety Alert:

## Avoiding slips and falls during icy and slippery conditions



It is important that everyone recognizes the hazards of icy/slippery walks and roadways and makes the appropriate adjustments. Several things can be done to reduce the risk of injury when slippery conditions exist...

1. Wear boots or overshoes with gripping soles. High heels, slick leather, plastic, or smooth surfaced soles on shoes will increase the risk of slipping.
2. Do not walk with your hands in your pockets. This reduces the ability to use your arms for balance if you do slip.
3. Take short deliberate shuffling steps in very icy areas.
4. Do not carry or swing heavy loads, such as large boxes, cases or purses that may cause you to lose your balance while you are walking.
5. Give yourself plenty of time. Take short steps with your feet pointed slightly outward. This will help keep your center of balance under you and provide a stable base for support.
6. Don't step on uneven surfaces. Avoid curbs covered with ice.
7. Try to walk on snow rather than icy areas.
8. Place your full attention on walking. Distractions such as reading, digging in your pocketbook or backpack while walking on ice are dangerous.
9. Use caution when entering buildings. Watch for puddles of water and tracked in snow.
10. If you are the first one to arrive at your building, take the initiative to spread salt on the steps and building entranceways. Note: Do not attempt to carry the salt bucket if you believe it is too heavy. Have someone else help you so that you don't get injured in the process.
11. Dress warmly. Being cold may cause you to hurry or tense your muscles -- both of which can affect your balance.
12. Be extremely careful getting out of your vehicle. If possible, swing your legs around and place both feet on the pavement before you attempt to stand. Steady yourself on the doorframe until you have gained your balance. Avoid reaching beyond your center of balance to take hold of the door, because this may cause a fall.
13. Don't take shortcuts. Always use sidewalks and the cleared paths in parking lots. Never walk between parked cars. Be especially careful when stepping to different levels -- down or up steps or from curbs (don't step on curbs); and remember, grassy slopes can be as dangerous as snowy steps.
14. When walking after sunset or in shadowed areas, be alert for black ice -- particularly in the days following a storm. Once parking lots, sidewalks and steps have been cleared, a thin layer of water remains and refreezes when the temperature drops.
15. On stairs, use handrails for balance wherever available. Be sure to walk on the cleanest part of the step. 4. Place the whole foot on the step with your toes against the riser of the step. Coming down, place your heels against the riser, again with your whole foot on the step.
16. If you slip, fall as limply as possible. Don't resist the fall by putting out a straight arm to take up the shock. Bend your elbows and knees to use your legs and arms to absorb the fall, or try to roll as you land, easing yourself down with bent arms.

**For replacement of calcium ice melt buckets at the entranceways to the building, call your Building Manager.**

**If after contacting your Building Manager, the hazardous condition has not been resolved, report the condition to the Safety & Health Services Division Safety Hotline at extension 8800.**